

*Launceston Probus Club Inc.*



*Writers Writers  
Launceston Probus Borrowing Li-  
brary*

*Author Biography  
March 2017*

*Compiled by Writers Writers*

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# Contents

Writers Writers.....	3
Emailing list for core members.....	6
Author Biographies.....	7
Dr Keith Adkins.....	7
John Archer.....	8
Marie Briggs - Koning.....	9
Dr Tom Dunning.....	10
Elvin Fist.....	11
David Harvey OAM.....	15
Dr John D. Paull.....	16
Ted Pedley.....	17
Paul A.C. Richards AM.....	17
Gill Morris.....	19
Dr John C. H. Morris AO MBE.....	21
Roger Syms.....	21
Lana Wall.....	22

## Writers Writers

In June 2016 a new special interest group was proposed to the membership of the Launceston Probus Club by Past President, Paul A.C. Richards AM.

Some years ago he proposed to the Club the formation of 'Special Interest Groups' and in the late David Blackwood's year as president the executive committee introduced several which included Fishing, History, walks and Photography all of which are still flourishing within the Club.

In more recent times Paul has added Fine Dining which has proved very successful amongst the membership during the past three years.

As a Club we have always recognised the ability and talent of our membership and seized the opportunity of hearing about their exploits in our regular Meanderings. The intellectual capacity within the Launceston Probus Clubs membership runs extremely deep and warrants the recording of members *Meanderings* as well as new members' biographies in *Man Behind the Badge* for historical purposes.

Many of our members have had the opportunity to express themselves in literary pursuits and several have taken the leap to publication. A courageous step as Mr Humphreys would have said in "Yes Minister". When a book or article is written the author exposes him or herself to the public which in itself is sometimes frightening and confronting as they lay themselves open to criticism something we all find difficult to accept. However, there are a few authors amongst our membership who have

taken that leap and survived exceptionally well publishing on a diverse range of subjects.

**Dr John Morris** published '*In our Streets*' on the origins of Launceston Street names and then later a biographical account of Dr Clifford Craig.

**David Harvey** published on the history of the Alpine Club and the Ben Lomond Ski Fields.

**Ted Pedley** published on family history

**Dr John Paull** published on the exploits of Dr William Russ Pugh.

**John Archer** published on family and Tasmanian history

**Dr Tom Dunning** published on an American Vietnam soldier's journal and with colleagues Paul Richards and Barbara Valentine a book on the history of Launceston. *The Fabric of Launceston: A Collaborative Community History.*

**Dr Keith Adkins** published on Reading *and the Evandale Library*

**Jim Anderson** published on the Invermay State School

**Elvin Fist** published *Gladly Teach*

**Paul A.C. Richards** published on Medical & Local History and more recently on Fishing and Cricket.

**Lana Wall** published on *Lindsay Haslem.*

**Marie Briggs** published on personal memories

**Gill Morris** published local history personalities *Journal of Charlotte Cleveland & The Journal of Rev William Henry Browne LLD.*

**Roger Syms** co-authored and published 'On a Cushion of Air'

Others have been essay contributors to locally published books or have during their professional career published peer reviewed papers etc.

Those that have contributed to several books on local and medical history include”

Dr's Keith Goulston, John Morris, John Paul, Bert Sundstrup, Keith Adkins along with Elvin Fist, Ivan James, Chris Cohen and several others which I have not mentioned.

And finally those who would like to write with an aim of publication and for them to use the group as a platform to learn about the art and pitfalls in modern day publishing.

It was then proposed to the executive committee that a new special interest group 'Writers Writers' be established. This group would consist of members who have published a book/s in their own right as well as those who had published peer reviewed articles along with any aspiring writers who would like to be part of this special interest group. The committee approved the new group 'Writers Writers' at their meeting held on the 12 July.

The group was launched on 26 July 2016 over a moderately catered soup and sandwich luncheon at the Launceston Golf Club.

There are several writers and publishers amongst the club membership and that the membership would be interested in what their fellow writers have published in the past and what is on the horizon in new publications. Likewise, we know there is a book in all of us!! But how does one get started. The group may even take on a group publication on a subject that would be of interest to our club history and the vast talent of its membership.

### **Emailing list for core members**

John Morris	johnchmorris@dodo.com.au
Paul A.C. Richards	pacrichards1@bigpond.com
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John Archer	djsarcher@bigpond.com
John Paull	jdpauull@intas.net.au>;
Tom Dunning	tdunning@utas.edu.au
Keith Adkins	keithadkins@bigpond.com
Jim Anderson	jamaa27@bigpond.com
Elvin Fist	efist7@bigpond.com
Lana Wall	lane.wall@activ8.net.au
Marie Briggs	marken@bigpond.net.au
Gill Morris	melandgill@netspace.net.au
Roger Syms	rsyms@bigpond.net.au

## **Author Biographies**

The following authors are all members of the Probus Club of Launceston. All have written and published either single or multiple books on subjects of intrinsic interest. With the establishment of a borrowing library within the Club and formation of a special interest group Writers Writers those authors have penned their biographical accounts of those books which have been donated to the library and available to the membership.

In all there are 14 authors holding membership and three spouses making up the group who have donated their works and who have kindly contributed to this booklet.

### **Dr Keith Adkins**

As a Book Conservator for the past thirty years I have explored an interest in books both as material objects and for the role they play in society. In 1996 I completed an Honours year at UTAS under the guidance of a number of very special lectures including Dr Tom Dunning, now a prominent member of this club. My thesis was a study of the 15<sup>th</sup> century printer Wynkyn de Worde, inheritor of the Caxton Press on the death of William Caxton, England first printer.

Encouraged by the prospect of further academic study and with Tom's encouragement, a chance conversation with Chris Tassell, then Director of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, alerted me to the existence in their archives of the early records of the Evandale Subscription Library, founded in 1847, naming the books, the borrowers and their borrowings for the first 14 years. The survival of such records is rare in the English speak-

ing world. These records led me to embark upon a wider study of libraries, books and reading in colonial Tasmania and the role they played in the transmission of knowledge, values and ideas and their contribution to the building of a civil society in a land founded as a penal settlement; and for which my PhD was awarded, and upon on which my book *Reading in Colonial Tasmania: The early years of the Evandale Subscription Library*, published 2010, was based.

### **John Archer**

In 2001 my Wife Sally and I sold our dairy farm at Circular Head to our son Grant and retired. Retirement meant I needed to find something interesting to do and I decided to document my family history. My grandparent's names were Archer, Headlam, Scott, and Lucadou-Wells. Because the Archer genealogy had been extremely well done by Dr Neil Chick in the 'The Archers of Van Diemen's Land' I decided to begin with the Lucadou-Wells. However I soon came across a major scandal within that family which caused me to rush and excitedly tell my cousin about. This was a mistake as she was outraged that I had dared to mention it and has hardly spoken to me since. Disconcerted, and rather cowardly, I switched to the Scott Family. In researching them I came across a large number of letters in the State Archives and Queen Victoria Museum written by two of my ancestors, James and George Scott. They were written to their older brother Thomas after he returned to Scotland in 1836. Over the next four years I transcribed these and published them as 'The Scott Letters – VDL & Scotland 1836-55'.



Later I became interested in a number of articles in ‘The Mercury’ written in the 1880s. The author was Theophilus Jones who toured Tasmania and wrote about the various places he visited. I transcribed those with the result being ‘Touring Tasmania in the 1880s’.

These two books are a result of transcribing what other people wrote and although both books contain material which I have written I consider myself to be a transcriber rather than an author. However I am presently engaged in writing a book about Thomas Scott, the recipient of the letters, who was an early Tasmanian surveyor. Only when that is finished and published would I consider myself to be an author.

### **Marie Briggs - Koning**

The book was written at the request of our children and started as my memories. However, after one of our daughters read the script, a number of questions arose, thus the insertion of and...

It soon became obvious to me that our children knew little about the events leading up to and during WW11 in the Pacific. Furthermore, few Australians were aware how much the Dutch were involved in the defence of Australia. In short, when HMAS Voyager was sunk the only defence of the West Australian coast relied upon two Dutch destroyers. Even Dutch submarines were utilized.

When General MacArthur said “I shall return!” America could not supply him with a readymade fleet but 27 Dutch merchant ships were used by the Americans to transport everything needed to assist the war effort.

These ships were skippered by Dutch sailors and Indonesian or Chinese crew. Dutch air and army forces were also present in Australia.

When I mentioned that I had been a Japanese Internee, the reply often was. “I’ve seen the film, A Town Like Alice”. Few realised that there were over ten thousand women and children in most of these camps but did not include the boys’ camps.

All in all, during WW11, seventy to eighty thousand Dutch women and children were interned.

### **Dr Tom Dunning**

#### *John’s Journal*

In 2014 I co-edited, the journal of an old university friend who was killed in Cambodia during the Vietnam War. This book was a labour of love. I met his old girlfriend, who had been trusted with the journal, after 40 years. We worked together on the project, meeting in all places Las Vegas, where she met my two Vietnamese daughters. We published with Blurb which produced a very inexpensive, attractive paperback. I recommended Blurb to anyone who wants to publish a book of personal significance to them.

#### *The Fabric of Launceston*

This book is the product of my post retirement historical project which I undertook with two old friends, Probus members Paul Richards and Barbara Valentine, with whom I had published two other books which are available in the Probus library, *The LGH, 150 years of caring*, and *Effecting a Cure: Aspects of Medicine in Northern*

*Tasmania.* When you edit community histories, you become part of a wonderful community of writers and researchers.

### **Elvin Fist**

‘Gladly Teach’ is the history of the Launceston Teachers’ College which existed from 1948 until 1972. In the latter year it ceased to be controlled and operated by the Education Department of Tasmania and became a school within the Tasmanian College of Advanced Education, controlled by a Council which operated under a new act of parliament.

From 1964 until 1972, I was Vice-Principal of the Launceston College. When we celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> year of existence of the College in that year and took part in the opening of the new version of teacher education in the north of the State, I felt that it would be appropriate to write a history of the College. From 1973 until 1989 I continued in a senior position in teacher education in the CAE.

The records of the College from the late 1950s onwards had been meticulously maintained, chiefly through the work of Mrs Joyce Mace, the Principal’s secretary. I saw in these an invaluable resource on which to base a history. The Principal of the College who later became head of the School of Teacher Education, Dr Geoffrey Howard, gave me permission to use these resources in 1976 but nothing much was done for many years after that. All I did was to collect material that came to hand and that I thought might be useful and put it away for the time when leisure would be available to work on the book.

Dr Haward retired in 1986 and was replaced as Head of School by Dr Bill Mulford who was very keen in 1988, the fortieth anniversary of the commencement of the College, and in later years to support reunions of teachers who had trained in the College. He saw great value in these. He gave me the task of organising several, including that of the 1948-trained teachers, almost all of whom had retired from teaching. Several other reunions were held in these years which I attended but did not actually organise. All these reunions of teachers were valuable in giving me insights into the life of the teachers as students in training and later in service in schools throughout the State and elsewhere. I continued to gather a mountain of material and contacts about the College.

I retired from full-time work in 1989 but continued to do some part-time teaching in the CAE for two more years. During these years I slowly began to work on the history that I had envisaged.

At the same time, one of my colleagues in the CAE, Brian Pirkis, a senior lecturer with a special interest in the history of Australian education, was considering writing some of the history of the CAE as it was clear that the TCAE and the University of Tasmania were about to merge and a new chapter in post-secondary education was beginning. In December 1990, Brian and I agreed that he would write the history of the CAE from its commencement in Launceston in 1972 in Launceston and that I would confine myself to the history of the 1948-72 Education Department College which was my primary interest. Brian never completed his assignment, however: sadly, on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1991, he was killed in a

road accident and we lost a great friend and a fine scholar. And were never to have the benefit of the fine history he would have written.

I devoted much of 1992 to drafting the history; this entailed many interviews with people who had been associated with the College in various roles, including many teachers who had trained in the College, and in thoroughly analysing the mountain of documents produced by the College and by the Education Department. This was a very rewarding year for me as I was able to piece together the history and come to understand it in ways that had so far eluded me. Writing the history was difficult insofar as I had to portray the life and work of an institution which was often unpopular among many teachers, and write about the work and life of many people still very much alive who for various reasons had been unpopular or controversial or larger than life. On the other side of the coin, it gave me an enormous appreciation of the work of many people that I had not had before as I now understood the problems they had faced and contributions they had made.

At the end of 1992, I came up with a rough draft. I submitted this or parts of it to people I trusted for their knowledge and honesty about the subject. Among these were Mr Athol Gough, Dr Don Levis, and Dr Geoff Howard all principals of the College at various times. The family of the late Mr Don Tribolet a former Director of Education and the founding Principal were also involved. They all suggested refinements and modifications and gave me valuable insights I might not have otherwise had in the same way. I reduced the size of the

manuscript by 25 per cent which was harder than writing the original. The resulting work was the product not just of my efforts but also that of many who were volunteered or enlisted or dragooned into helping me.

In early 1993, my wife, Mary, and I and two other family members spent a long holiday in the UK and Europe. Mary had greatly encouraged me in relation to the whole project and so I was glad that we could enjoy this overseas trip together. On my return, I faced the final chores of indexing and publishing the manuscript. And Mary and I had also to face the fact that she was very ill. Most of the joy of the research and writing disappeared.

Dr Bill Mulford, Dean of Education, was perhaps the greatest contributor to the final production. He gave me full use of facilities for a long time after my retirement. He persuaded the University and the Education Department to edit, finance and manage the publication which was launched on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 1993 at a crowded gathering on the Newnham campus. 500 copies were proudly printed by the Mercury in Hobart. (Nowadays a few copies can be bought through rare book firms....I found three on line at \$100 each recently.)

The University decided that the records I had used in the research should be deposited in the Tasmanian Archives. I had a four-wheel-drive utility at the time that I used mainly to tow my boat. I loaded it up, drove to the Archives Office in Claremont and deposited them into its care.

I am still occasionally invited to reunions of teachers who were educated in the Launceston Teachers' College.

## David Harvey OAM

Ever since, as a small boy seeing Fred Smithies lantern slide lectures I had been fascinated by Ben Lomond and skiing. When the Northern Tasmanian Alpine Club lodge burnt down in 1996 a lot of memorabilia was lost so I believed it was time to record the history of the development of the mountain. Throughout the project I was encouraged by NTAC foundation members Heini von See and Gilbert McKinlay. Heini, Gilbert and Tony Godfrey-Smith suggested that I should stop writing after recording the pioneering era on the mountain, but my son John said that if you want to sell the book you will have to include the new clubs and lodges, which I did even though Heini von See at one time said "that he would probably be dead before the book was published", Fortunately he and Gilbert McKinlay were still alive for the book launch. It made their day.

The 1999 ski season on Ben Lomond was a disaster - only about three days of very poor snow. From experience I knew that skiers get very excited in late June just before the ski season. My thoughts were that if the 2000 season was as bad nobody would be interested in a book on Ben Lomond, so I launched the book in late June of that year. Unfortunately it became a bit of a rush in the end, and a couple of "typos" were missed in the proof-reading.

In marketing "The Ben Lomond Story" I had a captive market - all the Ben Lomond skiing fraternity, many of whom I knew personally and many of whom I interviewed for the book. The book sold out very quickly. I had only 500 printed - the temptation was to print 1,000,

but from my experience at Birchalls I had seen many good books not sell to be finally remaindered out well below cost. Recently a number of skiers have suggested that I have a re-print but at this stage I don't think so.

### **Dr John D. Paull**

After an exciting career in clinical anaesthesia, administration, teaching and anaesthesia research for over 35 years, John retired in 2007. He has authored more than seventy peer reviewed scientific papers and written a number of book chapters for anaesthesia texts. He has held senior positions in Government boards of enquiry and professional bodies. Since 2005 he has discovered more of the real Launceston doctor, William Russ Pugh, his innovations, his triumphs and tragedies. Not just the first doctor in Australia to offer ether anaesthesia to surgical patients, but an active scientist and supporter of local good causes Pugh set an example to his colleagues but attracted vicious professional jealousy. He was a founding member of the Royal Society of Tasmania.

After eight years research John unearthed many interesting and controversial aspects of Pugh's career and completed this biography revealing the life and times of Pugh and his wife Cornelia in the bustling mid nineteenth century Launceston.

John has an appointment in the School of Humanities at the University of Tasmania as a University Associate and is Past President of the Northern Chapter of the Royal Society of Tasmania.

John has recently facilitated the donation of Pugh's 1835 shipboard log and journal to TAHO by great-great-



grandchildren of Pugh's sister. He has transcribed and annotated the 62 page journal and will shortly publish it as "Persistence Pays. The Discovery of Dr Pugh's Handwritten Log and Journal of his 1835 Voyage to New Holland"

### **Ted Pedley**

I considered before writing the book 'My Life' that I had experienced a very interesting and fortunate life extending over 75 years.

Changes in life experiences never change.

I believe it would be of interest to my family and others to publish such a book.

### **Paul A.C. Richards AM**

In my last two years at school I developed a passion for English literature and Expression along with Modern History and in 1963 produced my first newsletter for the Tasmanian Caverneering Clubs Northern Branch ' *Trog-lodyte* '. This introduction to the publishing world would surface again with my first published book in 1999. Since that time I have published numerous scientific peer reviewed papers and this year completed my 18<sup>th</sup> book on subjects ranging from local history, medical history, cricket and trout fishing.

I devote most of my time researching and writing books these days and always have a minimum of five to six books approaching publication. Funding publications is getting quite difficult as costs have increased so much over the past decade.

## PUBLISHED BOOKS

1. The True Life and Crimes of a Body-Snatcher, published-London, ISBN 0-9537648-0-X
2. The History of Spurr Wing
3. “Nyllavert” The House that Barnes Built
4. Voyages in a Caravan. The logs of Frank Styant Brown
5. Goitre Monitor: The History of Iodine Deficiency in Tasmania
6. Effecting a Cure: The History of Health & Medicine in Launceston.
7. Health, Wealth & Tribulation: Launceston’s Cataract Gorge.
8. Anaesthesia: Waking the Sleeping Giant
9. Launceston’s Heritage
10. For Women: Advice from a Medical Practitioner
11. Launceston General Hospital Celebrating 150years of Caring
12. A Window in Time (LGH Sesquicentenary) (2013)
13. Isotopes, Imaging & Identity: History of Nuclear Medicine in Australia & New Zealand (2014)
14. Little Grammar 1930-1970: Our Formative Years: Launceston Church Grammar Preparatory School (2015)
15. The Savigny Bat: Celebrating Cricket at Launceston Church Grammar School. (April 2016)
16. Ken Fletcher Dream Weaver: In Pursuit of the Elusive Trout (April 2016)
17. The Fabric of Launceston: A Collaborative Community History (June 2016)
18. Murder at the Launceston General Hospital (November 2016)

In 2016 a busy year with four major published books. Several of my books have been collaborative as I enjoy involving others to contribute and examples of this were two books on the Launceston Church Grammar School. *Little Grammar 1930-1970: Our Formative Years: Launceston Church Grammar Preparatory School* and *The Savigny Bat: Celebrating Cricket at Launceston Church Grammar School* where several of my school chums added great flavour to the two manuscripts.

In a similar genre two medical history books, *Effecting a Cure: The History of Health and Medicine in Launceston* and *Launceston General Hospital Celebrating 150years of Caring* had over 50 contributors and a lesser contribution of 20 contributors to a local history book *Health, Wealth & Tribulation: Launceston's Cataract Gorge*.

### **Gill Morris**

Libraries have always been a major part of my life: the Gladstone Memorial Library in Hawarden, North Wales, where I was born and 'schooled'; the National Library of Wales and University Library, Aberystwyth, where I read Honours History, and the newly established University College Library in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, where I was first employed - and later a career in school libraries and the Library Services Branch of the Tasmanian Education Department.

Since retiring, I have taken the opportunity to indulge my interest in local history, searching the manuscript collections of libraries, museums and archive offices in Tasmania, interstate and UK especially for items about northern Van Diemen's Land which contribute to our un-

derstanding of the cultural and social history of that time and place.

Our Launceston Library's Local Studies Collection includes a photocopy of Charlotte Cleveland's journal of her voyage to Launceston in 1852 and the original 3 volumes of the Journal of Rev William Henry Browne of St John's Church, dated 1830-45. By chance, I discovered that Charlotte's journal and other significant items were in the possession of a descendent and were kindly loaned to me and Friends of the Library Launceston published her Journals as the first of a Local History Series.

The Browne journal was a much 'heftier' four year undertaking of transcription, research, indexing and then, self-publishing. Inevitably there is much that is humdrum in his daily entries! The pattern of his domestic life was his church duties in a vast parish, rearing and educating his four children while coping with his wife's debilitating illness, building Bifrons and his seaside home San Souci at Kelso, battling bureaucracy for his church and his salary, the risks of travel and transgressions of his convict servants and his attempts to supplement his income by opportunistic purchases of land.

Wider issues include the convict system and its punishments, crime, concubinage, drunkenness, poverty and financial distress, the high mortality rate, the power of the local press, philanthropic activities, the friendly mission to the Aborigines, the education system, the intricacies of stock and land purchases and the initial settlement of Port Phillip. Specifically he was instrumental in the establishment of the Launceston Church Grammar School, the Launceston Bank for Savings, the Launces-

ton Benevolent Society and the Bible Society. While many of the 300 copies remain unsold, (I have no marketing experience!), I am heartened by the world wide interest (and queries) that has been shown by many scholars through the availability of the on line cataloguing entry.

### **Dr John C. H. Morris AO MBE**

*On behalf of John Morris by Paul A.C. Richards*

John Morris has always been interested in history especially medical and local history of Launceston. He has authored several scientific and medical peer reviewed papers and has written two books ‘*In Our Streets*’ in collaboration with his son and *A Man of All Seasons-Dr Clifford Craig*’.

### **Roger Syms**

Roger has spent a lifetime in maritime pursuits. After 11 years with BP Tankers and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary – arm of the Royal Navy he then went on to complete a maritime degree. He then joined Hoverlloyds cross-channel service developing a passion for this new method of sea transport.

In co-authorship with his colleague and personal friend Robin Paine they wrote ‘*On Cushioned Air*’, a history of Hoverlloyd and cross channel hovercraft as Robin and Roger were both captains of two of the four operating hovercrafts working out of Ramsgate and Calais, France.

This was such a new and innovative form of transport which saw so many professions coming together in a company which was so forward looking in the late 1960s

Camaraderie was paramount in the workforce which made their book so easy to write.

Published in 2012 with the foreword written by Prince Phillip, The Duke of Edinburgh, and this book received great acclaim in maritime circles as such a history had not previously been written.

### **Lana Wall**

A real jigsaw - how do you connect the dots between a Nebraskan, a journalist married to an Englishman, migration to Tasmania in 1971, then a librarian at University of Tasmania, retirement and an emerging interest in Oral History? Throw in the mix accompanying husband (Donald Wall) on the fishing jaunts of the Cora Lynn Fly Fishing and Casting Association. He had taken up fly fishing on his retirement. But all of that is still a long way off from writing a book about a fisherman.

Why write a biography of Lindsay Charles Haslem, a fly fisherman *extraordinaire*? The proposal was instigated by the Cora Lyn Fly Fishing and Casting Association (CFFCA), Launceston. Lindsay was the coach, and a foundation and life member; and more importantly the mentor to many members, since the inception of the club on 30 July 1991. He was revered in countless ways, many considering him a father figure. On his death in 1998 the club established a 'Lindsay Haslem Memorial Trophy' for an annual competition in his honour.

New members know little about Lindsay's contribution to and knowledge of fly fishing or about his character. There was a need to document the Haslem story.

Fortunately, the author did meet the man and his wife Jean shortly before he died, but did not fully realize what he knew about fly fishing, or how he imparted that knowledge and love for fishing to others until she started talking to people who knew Lindsay well.

Underlying the ethos of Lindsay was his drive to teach everyone to fly fish and to tell everyone where they could find fish.

Self-publishing is a very onerous task, filled with self-doubt, is time consuming, and very dependent on friends who help you on your way.

I am pleased to have the personal satisfaction of having a book in the National Library of Australia, but the venture is a never-to-be-repeated experience. 450 were printed, which was the right number and another 100 in hard-back.

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